

WEST VIRGINIA  
Department of



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CASPER Survey Released**  
*Findings Consistent with Other Data*

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** – The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Bureau for Public Health today released the Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) report which surveyed a representative sampling of households across the nine county area affected by the Elk River Chemical Spill. Health officials say the findings in the report are consistent with other medical information that has been previously released.

“CASPER was designed to capture information directly from a sample of the population that was affected by the Elk River Chemical Spill to learn about their experiences during this unprecedented event,” said Dr. Loretta Haddy, WV State Epidemiologist and Director, DHHR’s Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services. “The CASPER health questions were not designed or intended to assess ongoing or current health issues related to the spill. Yet the survey indicates that approximately 1/5 of the households surveyed had individuals who experienced symptoms consistent with those reported in the results in the emergency department record review, non-emergency health providers’ reports, the reports from the WV Poison Center and WV CAPS from the Kanawha Charleston Health Department. This further supports the need for additional studies to determine the long-term effects of MCHM on humans.”

The CASPER was conducted April 8-10, 2014 using valid statistical methods. CASPER involved officials from DHHR’s Bureau for Public Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and volunteers from the WVU School of Public Health in a door-to-door format to gather information on the household level about public health concerns in neighborhoods affected by the chemical spill.

In late June, DHHR Cabinet Secretary Karen L. Bowling and Dr. Rahul Gupta of the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department visited the state’s congressional delegation to request funding for further studies on the long-term impact of MCHM. The Bureau for Public Health is currently working on implementing new legislation that will require certain water utilities to file Source Water Protection Plans that identify potential contaminants located near public water supplies.

The full report is available online at <http://www.dhhr.wv.gov/News/Pages/default.aspx>

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